

Remarks and Exchange With Reporters on the Death of President Richard Nixon

April 22, 1994

The President. It is my sad duty to report to the people of the United States that Richard M. Nixon, who served as our 37th President, died this evening in New York City at 9:08 p.m., with his family at his side.

Hillary and I send our deepest condolences to the entire Nixon family. We hope that Tricia and Edward Cox, and their son, Christopher; and Julie and David Eisenhower, and their children, Jenny, Alex, and Melanie, know that the best wishes of all their fellow Americans are with them during their moment of sorrow.

It's impossible to be in this job without feeling a special bond with the people who have gone before, and I was deeply grateful to President Nixon for his wise counsel on so many occasions on many issues over the last year. His service to me and to our country during this period was like the rest of his service to the Nation for nearly a half century: He gave of himself with intelligence and devotion to duty. And his country owes him a debt of gratitude for that service.

We face today a world of increasing uncertainty and difficult challenges, but it is a world of great opportunity, in no small part because of the vision of Richard Nixon during a particularly difficult period of the cold war. He understood the threat of communism, but he also had the wisdom to know when it was time to reach out to the Soviet Union and to China. All Americans, indeed all people throughout the world, owe him what he regarded as the ultimate compliment: He was a statesman who sought to build a lasting structure of peace.

To be sure, he experienced his fair share of adversity and controversy. But his resilience and his diligent desire to give something back to this country and to the world provide a lesson for all of us about maintaining our faith in the future. In spite of everything, that faith led President Nixon to leave his mark on his times as few national figures have done in our history and led him to continue to serve right up to the end of his life. Indeed, no less than a month before his pass-

ing, he was still in touch with me about the great issues of this day.

Again I say the sorrow and the best wishes of the American people are with President Nixon's family. We thank them, and our prayers are with them.

Q. Have you spoken to the family, Mr. President?

The President. I have. I spoke with both Tricia Cox and Julie Eisenhower this evening, and we had a very good visit.

Q. Are you going to the funeral?

The President. Excuse me?

Q. Are you going to go to the funeral?

The President. I intend to go, yes.

Q. When will it be, do you know?

The President. The family has not made announcements, and I'm not sure they've made final decisions. It's my understanding that the funeral will be in California, and they'll announce something about it probably tomorrow.

Q. Will all the Presidents be going, former Presidents?

The President. I can't say that.

Q. Can you tell us something about your relationship with Mr. Nixon?

The President. Yes, well, we made contact with each other shortly after—I think shortly after the election—either that or shortly after I came in here. And then, as you will remember, I had him up to the White House for a visit. We talked frequently on the phone. I sought his advice about a number of issues in foreign policy, and we talked quite a lot about Russia. We had a good, long visit right before he went to Russia, and as I said, just a month ago today, I think, he penned his last letter to me of his thoughts on that trip and his advice.

So our relationship continued to be warm and constructive throughout the period of my Presidency, and he went out of his way to give me his best advice. And I was incredibly impressed with the energy and the vigor and, frankly, the rigor that he brought to analyzing this issue.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:03 p.m. in the Rose Garden at the White House. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Message to the Congress on the
Death of President Richard Nixon**

April 22, 1994

To the Congress of the United States:

It is my sad duty to inform you officially of the death of Richard Milhous Nixon, the thirty-seventh President of the United States.

Born in 1913, he was first elected to the Congress in 1946, a member of that historic freshman class of World War II veterans that also included John F. Kennedy. He was elected to the Senate in 1950, and served two terms as Vice President of the United States between 1953 and 1961. His career in the Congress coincided with the great expansion of the American middle class, when men and women from backgrounds as humble as his own secured the triumph of freedom abroad and the promise of economic growth at home.

He remained a visible presence in American public life for over half a century. Yet through all those years of service to his country, in the military, in the Congress, in the Presidency, and beyond, he cherished his life as a private man, a family man. He was lovingly devoted to his wife, Pat, to their daughters Patricia Cox and Julie Eisenhower, and to his four grandchildren.

His lifetime and public career were intertwined with America's rise as a world power. His faith in America never wavered, from his famous "kitchen debate" with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev through all of the debates that followed. We Americans and our neighbors abroad will always owe him a special debt for opening diplomatic doors to Beijing and Moscow during his Presidency, and his influence in world affairs will be felt for years to come.

Richard Milhous Nixon lived the "American Dream." Now, he rests in peace.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
April 22, 1994.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on April 23.

**Proclamation 6677—Announcing the
Death of Richard Milhous Nixon**

April 22, 1994

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

To the People of the United States:

It is with deep sadness that I announce officially the death of Richard Milhous Nixon, the thirty-seventh President of the United States, on April 22, 1994.

A naval officer cited for meritorious service in World War II, Richard Nixon has long been a fixture in our national life. In a career of public service that spanned a quarter of a century, he helped to shape American history. Before taking office as President in 1969, he served with distinction in the United States House of Representatives, in the United States Senate, and as Vice President in the Eisenhower Administration. From his early days in the Congress, through his tenure in the White House, and throughout the two decades that have passed since he left office, he remained a fierce advocate for freedom and democracy around the world.

Leaders in statecraft and students of international affairs will long look for guidance to President Nixon's tremendous accomplishments. His struggle to bridge the gaps between the United States and the former Soviet Union—beginning in the famous "kitchen debate" with Nikita Khrushchev and culminating with the détente of the early 1970s—helped to maintain the peace during a volatile era. Our improved relationship with the Chinese people today has grown from President Nixon's bold visit to China over 20 years ago. And in the many books he wrote more recently, he presented a cogent picture of emerging global politics that will serve as a guide for policy makers for years to come.

President Nixon offered our Nation a great many positive domestic initiatives as well. His work to clean up the environment, change our Nation's welfare system, improve law enforcement, and reform health care serves as an inspiration to us today as we seek to place the "American Dream" within the grasp of all of our citizens.